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COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY

MACROECONOMIC POLICY QUESTIONS

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Letter dated 12 July 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you the text of a letter sent by Mr. Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, President of the Republic of Tunisia and current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, to the Heads of State and Government of the seven most industrialized countries at their meeting held at Naples, Italy, from 8 to 10 July 1994 (see annex).

I request you to arrange for the text of this letter to be issued as a General Assembly document under items 32, 91, 92, 93 and 94 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Slaheddine ABDELLAH
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* A/49/50/Rev.1.

ANNEX

Message from President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, to the Heads of State and Government of the Group of Seven

It is a pleasure for me, on my own behalf and in my capacity as current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), to extend my greetings to your summit conference and to inform you of the importance we attach to the decisions and guidelines which will result from its work and which, we believe, will undoubtedly have the greatest impact on international relations in general and on economic relations in particular.

We proceed from the principle that we, in Tunisia, have always advocated, and which was reaffirmed at the thirtieth conference of African heads of State and Government, held recently at Tunis, namely, that the future of mankind, the balance and stability of the international community and the establishment of peace and security in the world cannot be achieved unless all peoples and States unite their efforts in cooperation and solidarity. The African continent, through its peoples and their leaders, has reiterated its determination to make an active contribution to this humanist undertaking and to escape from marginalization and underdevelopment, especially inasmuch as it has turned the last page of colonialism and racial segregation.

Africa is preparing today to mobilize its energies and its human and material potential in order to achieve economic and social development and extend democracy, security and stability in all parts of the continent. In assuming its responsibilities and relying in the first place on itself, Africa believes that the international community is still vested with the role of contributing to the achievement of these noble objectives.

Convinced that mankind shares a common destiny, Tunisia suggests to the industrialized countries in general, and to the seven richest countries in particular, to consider the implementation of a global international strategy for the development of Africa. Meanwhile, it renews its proposal, which I put forward in the messages I sent to you after the Toronto summit, and have outlined to many international forums, that a contract should be concluded for progress and peace and the achievement of co-development based on a healthy partnership capable of stimulating investment and restoring the balance of the terms of trade in the interests of all parties. In addition it would be necessary to resolve the problem of emigration of African labour to Europe, in particular so as to ensure security, stability and progress on the shores of the Mediterranean, and peace in the world.

The settlement of the debt problem of African States through the total or partial cancellation of their debts or the recycling of those debts into development and environmental protection projects remains in this connection at the forefront of the radical solutions which the rich countries must implement without delay in order to provide Africa with the conditions for real economic and social expansion and afford it a foundation capable of ensuring the success of the structural and political reforms undertaken by most of its States while

protecting them from social upheavals and the risks of a deterioration of security and stability.

The armed conflicts and flashpoints of tension in the African continent is experiencing at this crucial stage of change in the world, which have claimed hundreds of thousands of victims and created millions of refugees and homeless people, mainly women and children, as is the case today in Rwanda, make it imperative for the entire international community to provide effective support to African efforts and to the conflict settlement mechanisms established by OAU in accordance with the desire of the African peoples and States to restore peace and stability in the continent within the framework of international legality and the norms and ideals agreed upon by the international community, and in the context of close coordination and solidarity between OAU and the United Nations on the one hand and cooperation with all peace-loving States and forces on the other.

Considering the urgent need for international solidarity in respect of humanitarian problems, the thirtieth OAU summit accorded special attention to a range of problems and, in the first place, to the situation of African children, the proliferation of the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) and the increase in the number of refugees and homeless persons. The summit adopted a number of practical measures in this respect. It calls upon the international community and in particular the rich countries to back this effort and to support United Nations and regional mechanisms and non-governmental organizations in order to achieve this noble objective in the service of the African people and of mankind at large.

Your summit, I am convinced, is aware of the crucial importance of working to bridge the gap which now separates the African continent from the developed world, since if this gap persists it is liable to undermine balance, stability and security in the world. Africa, its States and peoples, are aware of their responsibilities to take up the great challenges which they are facing. Today, they are resolved more than ever before to spare no effort or sacrifice to gain their rightful place within the international community and contribute to achieving a better future for all mankind within the framework of international mutual assistance and solidarity.

In wishing your summit every success, I am confident that the voice of Africa will strike a responsive chord among you and elicit your full interest.